

CHAPTER - II

SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE MAYURANATHAR TEMPLE

The Mayiladuthurai region is chiefly presented in the chapter as Marudam (fertile plain) with a Neydal zone (coastal or littoral section) in the east. The five splits of the land in Tamil Country and the social life corresponding to each of these divisions are considered a unique feature of the society in the Sangam period. In practical terms, there were only four divisions in Tamil Country, namely Kurinji (mountainous region), Mullai (the postoral area), Marudam (fertile plain) and Neydal (desert) was only a transitory phase. However, based on the enrollment evidence existing for the period of our study, this chapter defines the social conditions of the Mayiladuthurai region. This region is the mix of Marutam in the west and Neydal in the coastal region.

The Tamil people of the Sangam or early historical period have been viewed from the perspective of social formation and by examining their material and social processes of production and distribution.¹ The anxiety of the man in that period was the cattle ranch, the cultivation of plow and the making in the primitive agriculture. These *tinai* divisions were scattered with each other and these economy-based land divisions were marked with different forms of production. The Marudam area witnessed the primitive level of subsistence of hunting and other sites in this Mayiladuthurai region, indicating that the society in this Mayiladuthurai region was well framed and based principally on agriculture. The Marudam people settled perpetually and started agriculture with the help of the water resources in Menpulam. This wealthy plain was used for agriculture which led to the development of the stratified bargain of the society that emerged in this region.

The status of women in this Mayiladuthurai region was much better, compared to the other region of *Tinai*, it was much better. The people of this Mayiladuthurai region lived in peace. Paddy was the leading profession of the town. In the Marudam

region, we find the growth of river basins and the development of rice cultivation, resulting in the appearance of states with the head of a monarch. The proprietorship of the land was in the hands of Vellalas. In the early stage, the Brahmanas did not occupy a high place in the social order. Fisher men lived in the coastal region. Fisher men otherwise known as Paratavar. When related to the Marudam people, the Paratavar mostly hinge on the local people for their fishing profession. Due to the lack of indication we fail to inform the northern part of the region. They were mostly involved to the temples. Those who were well-versed in knowledge of Vedas, they received lands in the fertile region and house situated near the gifts from the Kings. Meanwhile this Mayiladuthurai region was a fertile region, in all probability several Brahmadeyam hamlets had been created by the generous donation of Kings.

The evolution of temples in this Mayiladuthurai region as demonstrated by the Devaram hymns. It was additional important proof for the migration and settlement of Brahmanas in this region. Through the Pallavas period other practiced people were living like Vellalas. The coastal region was engaged by the trades people along with the fishing community. Trade people otherwise known as Vanikar. They run a wealthy life. The Silappadikaram intensely offers the image of Kaveripumpattinam and its commercial activity during the early Pallava age. Foreigners who came to this Mayiladuthurai region also settled in the coastal region, which was indicated by literary and archaeological resources, specifically coins and pottery were also one of the proofs of their best life.

Brahmanas

The professional based society converted Varna. Subsequently the Cholas shadowed Pallavas. They fortified the Brahmanas and gave plentiful donations for the creation of Brahmadeyams in this Mayiladuthurai region. During the Kulottunga III Chola period, the lands of the adjacent areas were given to the Brahmanas for their

hamlet. Nearly 29/2 Veli lands were given for the Brahmana hamlets in Kuttalam. For illustration, the lands belonging to Nagaram in Ulagamadevipuram, were shifted to the Brahmanas for this persistence. Of these lands 29 / *veli*, and 2 / *ma* of land have been assigned for settlement.

Several villages in this Mayiladuthurai region were precise by the *Sabha* or *Perunguri Sabha*, made by the Brahmanas of the respective settlements. It displays that Brahmanas were the mainstream of the people in society. For the utmost part, they were devoted to the temple.² Brahmanas were the most esteemed *sabha* associates of social order. Kings had the overall practice of naming the new *brahmadeyam* or *agraharam* after the name of the King or queen or after the titles of royal persons. Some of the Brahmana settlements were named after superiors or Gods and Goddesses. At some point they kept their old names lacking any change. From these, it is clear that in addition to the Brahmanas, the Uvachchars, and the cultivated people (Ulukudigal), the temple servants (tirukkovil udaiyar, Kaverippinakkal), also lived organized in the hamlet. Temple servants lived mostly in temple surroundings.³

Movements of Sabha or Perunguri Sabha

Preserving the temple lands and their fortune, he held regular village assemblies on all junctures. The collection and tolerance of taxes were in charge of the village *sabha*. They themselves had land in the village that became identified as *Sabhavilai* land.

The sixth inscription of Kulottunga-Chola III issued in his 25th regnal year 1203 A. D found on the same *Mandapa* in the Panchanadesvara temple registers a and purchase agreement by the *Mahasabha* of the temple. The *Mahasabha* remitting as urkil-iraiyili, the antarayam tax of half a *veli* of land, which is said to have been purchased by the temple from one Kasyapan Narasingan Tirupperambalanambi of Villiyanallur in Tiruvindalur Nadu. From this it is clear that the temple might have been

acted as record keeping centre of the nearby region. The Purchase of land and land purchase agreement of the *Mahasabha* was engraved on the walls of the temples. The land owner Kasyapan Narasingan Tirupperambalanambi of Villiyannallur in Tiruvindalur Nadu who sold the land perhaps a rich landowning communal group of the medieval society.

The record also mention certain signatories of the land purchase as witnessed of the deed namely Pariyalur Kizhavan Uttamapriyan of Urkanakku Nalurudaiyan, Kaasiban Narayan Thiruperumbalan, Kavuniyanbhattan of Sivadevabhattan, Narayanabhattan, Sivakalyananambi, Sarvedeva Chitrambalanambi, Kaasiyanputra Devabhattan, Naniyan Thiruvenkadubhattan, Kavuniyan Namban, Kodan Namban and Vikramachola Bhattan. The record makes mention the principal deity as Adi Chandeswara Devar. From this it is clear that the primal deity was popular in the name of Adi Chandeswara Devar during the medieval age.⁴

Gotra Names

Brahmanas have gotra names along with their proper names. Some of the known gotras from the epigraph of this Mayiladuthurai region were Bharathayan Madilan, Kausiyaban,⁵ Bharathvaji,⁶ Atraiyan, and Kausiya.⁷ Through the Rajaraja I Chola age, the Brahmanas were fortified by the royal harem. The renowned Chola Queen, Sembiyan Madevi, made numerous gifts for the preservation of the Brahmanas.

Professions

Brahmanas enjoyed a very high status in society and were mostly devoted to the temples of this Mayiladuthurai region. Brahmanas were employed in the temples as priests and chefs also as temple proprietors. In the Saiva temples, they were celebrated as Sivachchary. Certain Brahmanas were appointed ministers of the Kings and were exactly called *Brahmarayas* or *Brahmadhirayas*.

Kings, Queens and Society

The succeeding chief role in society was played by real people. The Kings were the true owners of the country's lands who made lavish donations to the temples and *Mathas* in this Mayiladuthurai region. They joined in the matter of local administrations through their officials and various communications were made in the indigenous administration of the welfare of society and temple affairs. Tax exemption, tax diversion, formation of the village level electoral system, punishment, royal donations, land sales, tax collection, etc., were the significant administrative purposes of the King for welfare from town. They established several temples in this vast region; this is the best illustration to know the superiority of Kings, Queens and Dukes.

Kshatriyas

The Kshatriyas are alleged to have come from the arm of God. The Kshatriyas were adventurers. Its major objective was to safeguard of people from external wars. They were great militaries. They liked warfare and fights. Members of the royal family were called Kshatriyas. The King generally belonged to this caste, and then he was the utmost Kshatriyas, the ruler and governor, conqueror and maintenance of instruction ⁸.

Titles Sported by the Rulers

Titles conferred to Kings such as Tyagasamudram, Uyyakondan, and Nittavinodan designated their grand status. The title, Maduraikondan Koparakesarivarman from Parantaka I Chola ⁹ exposes military powers and defeats. Kandalursalai Kalamarutaruliya Rajakesarivarman presumed the title by Rajaraja I Chola (996 CE) ¹⁰ and Kuriya Ulaganaittaium Kudaikilakkiya. Kulottunga Cholan, En-disai-ulagai oru Kudai Nilar Kiliruttiya Kulottungacholar was in custody of Kulottunga I Chola. ¹¹ Likewise, the Queens and Ladies of the royal harem joined in local affairs and had many gifts such as sale of land, purchase of land, construction of temples, renovation of temples, endowment of bronzes, sculpture, etc. During the Uttama Chola

period and the succeeding Rajaraja I Chola, the charitable activities of the royal woman Sembiyan Madevi and the celebrated Kundavai, the sister of Rajaraja I chola in this Mayiladuthurai region are remarkable.

Portrayal of the Kings

In addition to the surnames and other accounts that revealed the personal attraction of the Kings in general, there are the figurines of certain Chola Kings and Queens in Mayiladuthurai, how they looked in their actual lives. Sembiyan Madevi, Gandaraditya's wife constructed a rock temple, Umamahesvara temple at Thirunallam.¹² One more unique piece of this temple is the sculptural portrait; Sembiyan Mahadeviyar, during the reign of her son Uttama Chola, created an image of her husband Gandaraditya in the carriage of worshipping the God. He turned some of the brick temples into stone in places namely, Virutachalam, Thirukkodika, Thenkurangaduthurai, Thiruvarur Araneri, Anangur, Thirumananjeri,¹³ Kuttalam,¹⁴ Mayiladuthurai,¹⁵ and Thiruvakkarai. The statue of Uttama Chola in the stone temple of Konerirajapuram should have ascended some time before the third year of reign.¹⁶

Prime Duties of the Kings

Kings had certain responsibilities and everyday jobs. The foremost duty of the King was to deliver security to all his subjects and to reparation their crimes. It was predictable to protect the Kingdom from objections, external violence, and internal problems. It had to keep a well-organized police organization in the state and ensure the protection of order and peace in the Kingdom. There are various cases in the history of the Cholas that speak of the involvement of the ruling Kings to protect the people from external and internal disasters.¹⁷ Another important responsibility of the King was to uphold social order. Kings never made any attempt to abolish caste differences by restructuring society. One more function of the King was the administration of justice and he was the final buff in the Kingdom. The Chola Kings supported religious people

and constructed new temples in innumerable parts of the Kingdom.¹⁸ They also built towers, Mandapas, shrines, kitchens¹⁹, etc. in prevailing temples. They mounted idols in temples and provided land and money for daily pujas and annual festivals.²⁰ They kept the *Mathas* in the Kingdom.²¹ All these temple amenities did not make them religious leaders. They also took a number of successful processes to improve agricultural and irrigation facilities. This was called the irrigation committee (vayttalai kulaiyargal) of the Sirranaichchur assembly.²²

Control of the Kings

The people predictable the King to observe Rajadharma. Still, if he did not fulfill his duties due to his absolute propensities, the people had the right to rebel against the King, such a revolt would not be violent and nonviolent by nature. In the course of such mutiny, people would migrate from a specific region to alternative safe region and a better place as a sign of their protest against the arrogance of the King. This method was more effective than an armed revolution. It was painstaking the responsibility of the King to convey these people back by capable them better living conditions within the kingdom. The threat of departure from one Kingdom to another or from one part of the country to alternative got in the way of the entire powers of the King.

Virabhishegam

It seems that during the Chola age also there prevails the repetition of ravaging them zone of the defeated rulers. Often the conquests renowned their victory by conducting special coronation ceremonies. Such coronations are mentioned to as Virabhishegam.

Personal property of the Kings

The Chola Kings preserved personal property in the form of lands in different parts of the Kingdom. They gifted those lands to the temples for various temple deeds.

King's Personal Staff

At court or in camp, Kings were surrounded by a large body of officers and servants, generally called Udankuttam (personal staff). The pomp and splendor of the King were preserved by the personal staff, who were divided into several groups or units. Each unit was called Velam. Members of the Velam (palace servant) were housed in distinct rooms, nearby the capital palace. It seems that they were recruited from men and women, captured in war.²³ The palace staffs were astrologers, timekeepers, goldsmiths, sthaphathis, tailors, and street sweepers. This group also comprised the personal supporters of the Kings. The officials of the King's house were so-called agambadi-mudalis²⁴ and Sirudaram.²⁵

Community: Vellalas

The Vellala were considered important people in society. They were the landowners of the Mayiladuthurai region. His foremost profession was agriculture. This Mayiladuthurai region was well irrigated by the river water system. So the agricultural community played an important role in this region, many of them also held high places in the administration of the reigning authorities. Therefore, we can assume that the Vellala were in the highest position and their role both in society and in the state administration was noteworthy. Although the Vellala constituted a powerful section of the community in the hamlets, the Brahmanas controlled the village administration in this Mayiladuthurai region, as mentioned in many epigraphs. Compared to the *Vellanvagai* villages ruled by the *Urar*, the essential body of the cultivated people, several villages in Mayiladuthurai were *brahmadeyams* ruled by the *Perunguri Sabha* or *Sabha* as an alternative in *Ur*.

Mayiladuthurai, the fertile region in the Cauvery Delta, was mostly covered by *Devadhanams* or *Brahmadeyams*, ensuing in fewer donations from Vellala to the society. The portion of Kaverinallur had been removed as *Vellanvagai* village, one

Nagan Aditya Pidaran, a fence from this village, devoted a certain crime. Their lands, acquired along with the other lands of the town, became a *devadana* of the temple. The Vellala for some time could not pay taxes to the indigenous assembly for their farming. The Vellalas of Manakkudi, alias Uttamachola Chaturvedimangalam, touched an contract with the village assembly on the non-payment of taxes²⁶.

There are several orientations to Vellalas high position in the state administration during the Cholas era. The term Muvendavelan was adorned by Vellala officials in the land tax office during this period. Virasekhara-Muvendavelan,²⁷ Neriudaiyachchola-Muvendavelan,²⁸ Vanavan muvendavelan,²⁹ Valavaraja-Muvendavelan,³⁰ Rajendrasimha-Muvendavelan,³¹ Rajaraja-Tanjainattu-Muvendavelan,³² Rajanarayana-Muvendavelan,³³ and Rajanavelan were the important officials from this region. Rajakesari Muvendavelan obliged under Uttama Chola. Rajanarayana Muvendavelan and Rajarajathanjainattu Muvendavelan served under Kulottunga Chola as Thirumandiravolai. Vellala officials furnished lavish gifts to the temple and were accountable for many temples.

An inscription of begins with historical introduction (prasasti) *Tribuvanachakravarti Maduraiyum Eezhamum konu Pandiyan Mudithalaiyunk Kondarulina Sri Kulottunga Chola Devarku* who is identified with Kulottunga III Chola issued in his 25th regnal year 1201-1202 C.E. found on the same wall of the Panchanadesvara temple. This fourth inscription of Kulottunga III Chola registers a gift of a hundred *kalam* of paddy from tax free land per year as *irai* for the *sabhaviniyogam* of the *mahasabha* of Rajendra Chaturvedimangalam. The gift of hundred *kalam* paddy for entrusted to Chandraditavar the special priest who conducted spiritual services and rituals to the Adi Chandeswaradevar deity of this temple. It shows that donors like Vellalas not only endowed for the spiritual services of main deity but also other sub-shrine including Adi Chandeswarar who is none other than Chandikeswarar and its sub-shrines.

The record also makes mention gift of a hundred *kalam* of paddy from tax free land as *Irai* for annual subscription by one Mangalankilan Andukondan Amudalvan a *vellala* landlord of this region made annual due for the *sabhaviniyogam* of the *mahasabha* of Rajendra Chaturvedimangalam. From this it is clear that Mangalankilan Andukondan Amudalvan of nearby Rajendra Chaturvedimangalam a rich Vellala made rich endowment for the *mahasabha* who carried out the local self -Government activities of Rajendra-chaturvedimangalam in northern banks of the river Cauvery. More over this lithic record portrays the measurements of 100 *kalam* of paddy which is collected as annual tax due for the *mahasabha* of Rajendra Chaturvedimangalam. Therefore, the fertile land nearby the region yielded a huge income source to the Mayuranathaswamy temple. Further the fertile lands situated on the southern and northern banks of the river Cauvery were irrigated by the river. Thus the local revenue administrative system stood as one among the pillars of Chola imperialism. The epigraph also mentions the primal deity as Kulottunga Cholan Kutralatthudaiyar and the temple as Thiruvaiyatrudiayar Koil.³⁴

An inscription of begins with historical introduction (prasasti) *Tribuvanachakravarti Maduraiyum Eezhamum kondu Pandiyan Mudithalaiyunk Kondarulina Sri Kulottunga Chola Devarku* who is identified with Kulottunga III Chola issued in his 25th regnal year 1201-02 A.D. found on the east wall of the same *mandapa* in the Panchanadesvara temple registers an endowment of lands in two pieces of land measuring 7 and half *ma*. The fifth inscription of Kulottunga-Chola III gift of two pieces of land measuring 7 and half *ma* by one Brahmana and another Vellala landowners respectively of Sivapadasekhara-chaturvedimangalam to the temple of Tiruvaiyarudaiyar. The record also refers that the above mentions land enough to provide 60 *kalam* of paddy per year free of any taxes to the main deity of this temple. The record also refers to Chandraditavar, the special priests who agreed to conduct the spiritual services without fail.

This record also mentions that this measurements of paddy is said to have been originally measured by the temple Sonnavararivar, a special official who collected the food grains from the donors. This measurement of paddy already given as *devadana* now transferred to the main deity for spiritual services of this temple. Further the expression Brahmanas and Vellalas irrespective of their communal groups who were land owning communal groups of the region made endowments for the development of the temple. The special official Sonnavararivar who may be served as Chief of the treasury of the temple. Thus the temple possess a huge treasury and acted as economic center the nearby hamlets. The temple served as a center of economic activity of medieval period in Tamil Country. The donors undertook to pay the *Irai* from their own lands by themselves and also not to collect the *antarayam* may be land tenure which seems to have been due from such tax-free lands. The record registers a royal gift of village as Devadana-iraiyili (tax free land) for worshipping and special offerings during the Kulottunga III Chola.³⁵

Kaikkolas

The word Kaikkolas was the name of a prominent community of weavers. There are several epigraphs showing that they also joined in the army.³⁶ The word Kaikkolas is said to be derivative from Kai (Earth) and Kol (Shuttle).³⁷ This recommends the outdated association of the Kaikkolas as weavers.³⁸ Adityapanmaterinda-Kaikkolar,³⁹ Karikalasolant-terinja-Kaikkolar,⁴⁰ Parthivasegarant-terinja-kaikkolar,⁴¹ and Agambadi-kaikkolas⁴² were found in the epigraphs of the temples of Mayiladuthurai region.

Traders

The merchants of Mayiladuthurai region were principally betrothed in domestic trade. They sold various goods; cotton, turmeric, betel leaves, walnuts, pepper, salt grain, saffron, sandalwood, pearl, diamond, etc. We don't have any straight orientation to these products in Mayiladuthurai region.

Shepherds

The shepherds are cited in the epigraphs by different names like *Yadhavar*, *Manradi*, *Itaiyar*, *Konnar*, and *Agambadiyar*. The herder (idaiyan) will herd the village's cattle and take care of appropriating them in pens. They lived in isolated neighborhoods entitled *Ayarppadi*, *Ayankudi*, or *Duvarapatti*. Herdsmen and cowherd men were the significant human actions closely related with temple donations in hamlets. They kept sheep and cows donated to the temples. They were the people who provided milk, butter and curd to the temple for the daily pujas.

Valangai and Idangai Groups

The terms *valangai* (right hand) and *Idangai* (left hand) that seem in Tamil epigraphs from the 11th century forwards and also in British archives from the 18th and 19th centuries are often measured to denote two equally opposing social partitions. The overhead facts, obviously, would not support a clear calculation of the Valangai with the land-based agriculture castes and that of the *Idangai* with the commercial and artisan castes, at least during the first phase of their history. At first, the term *valangai* is found in the late 10th century in the records of Rajaraja I Chola, who was the first ruler to establish a large army for his imperial expeditions. In these records it is used only as a designation for military battalions. After that, in the second half of the 11th century, we come across a generous of poll tax termed the *valangai-idaigai maganmai*.⁴³

The origin of these splits is unknown. At first they were designated as warrior class people. These two sections of the soldier class raised their disputes before the King, one of the parties was located to the right of the monarch and the other was placed to the left (Valangai, Idangai).⁴⁴ The expression “Valangai 98 and *Idangai* 98 classes” displays that these groups were minor parties. The *Idangai* partition of the left of the lower social assemblages in the macro region during the Chola period was

undoubtedly related with Guild and artisan professions, as the split of the right was with agrarian activities.⁴⁵

Musicians

Furthermore, there are a series of references in this region that refer to the community of musicians known as Uvachchan (drummer) .⁴⁶ They went to the temples to play various musical tools in the temple at the time of the puja ritual. Most of the temples in this region had the services of Uvachchars. They enthusiastic themselves to playing various musical instruments. They established payment, either in cash or in kind, from the temple revenue.

Kusavar

Kusavar are in charge for making pottery in the hamlet. Every town had this communal group. They delivered pottery to the people and also the china for the temple. Hereafter they were in a good position in Mayiladuthurai region during the Cholas period.

Status of Women

Women give the impression to have played vital role in society. During the Sangam age, women were given a subsidiary position, but they were well versed in literature, music, and dance. Poets of more than fifty found their residence in the age of Sangam. Because women were in those days they did not take over property. The interruption between the end of the Sangam epoch and the beginning of the Pallava dynasty was known as the Kalabra period. Through this period, the position of women was depressed. They were preserved as sensual beings and slaves. During the Pallava age, women were highly cherished in society. They had a great concentration in religion and temple activities. They adored the right to possessions during the period. During this Pallava period, the Queen adored special refreshment stand and freedoms.

In the early Pandya age, the position of women seemed to have the equal value as that of men. They engaged a prominent place in this society. The status of women in Chola society was of special position. The epigraphs gave many examples of upper-class women owning property in their own right and arranging it as they satisfied. The impact exerted by some of the princesses of the royal family on the public policy of the ruling princes had already been noted.⁴⁷ Although Kings and nobles spoiled in a number of wives, the exclusive family was undoubtedly the normal unit of social life. Female labor jobs in lower-skilled professions were perhaps as common as today. They relished property rights.⁴⁸

Chola Queens

The Chola queens were learned and pious and bore the title of Bhuvanamulududaiyal or Avanimulududaiyal and Dharanimulududaiyal, "the mistress of the whole world."⁴⁹ Epigraphs from this region lectured her by several names such as Udaiyapirattiyar,⁵⁰ Madurantaka Madevadigalar alias Sembiyan Madeviyar,⁵¹ Pirantakan Madevadigalar alias Sembiyan Madeviyar,⁵² Udaiya-Pirattiyar, Orattanan Sorabhaiumyar, Navikidekan,⁵³ and Ardevanyan Sorabhaiumyar, Navikidekan and Sedevanyan Madeviyar⁵⁴. One more queen is named Vaanavan Mahadevi aka Thiribhuvana-Mahadevi,⁵⁵ Thirailokya Madeviyar,⁵⁶ Mukkokkilanadigal.⁵⁷

The Queens preserved property in their name. They took pride in donation donations and endowments to their preferred Gods and Goddesses. This is established by various epigraphs. Sembiyan Mahadevi, Queen of Gandaraditya and mother of Uttama Chola, turned the existing temple of Thirunallam into a stone temple (Karrali). The contemporary temple was constructed by Sembiyan Mahadevi in memory of her late spouse during the reign of their son Uttama Chola.⁵⁸

Devadasis

The devadasis class has continuously held a significant place in Tamil society. In the meantime pre-historic times, the Nautch Girl had been a great social attraction. Her public advents were often related with spiritual festivals and devadasis was commonly skilled in music and dance. The social place of the devadasis in the ancient Chola country is obviously point out by many records that record rich gifts made by them for several public benefits and the credit rendered by local powers to their public spirit.⁵⁹ The girls of the temple sang, danced and executed before them to the gladness of the Gods. They danced and sang before the god every day at exact times. This was estimated compulsory to please the deity and therefore they were known as *devaradiyar*.

The devadasis were experts in sixty-four arts, particularly playing the Yal. The work predictable of slaves was of many kinds. The care of the lamps, the attention to the conduct of the festivals, the husking of the rice arena and the washing of clothes, were heavenly service; It is even suspected that this cognizance caused women to become attached to the temple.

The tenth damaged and undated inscription of Tribhuvanaviradeva who is identified with Kulottunga Chola III found on the same wall of the Panchanadesvara temple refers a gift made by the maha-sabha of suddhamali-chaturvedimangalam, an agaram of Peravur- nadu in Jayangondasola-valanadu, of some pieces of land as tirunamatukkani and also as urkkil-iraiyili to the temple of Tiruvaiyarudaiyar built by Pillai Karanai- Vilupparaiyar.

This record also mentions the historical beginning of the same expressions of the king's exploits. The date portion devadasi, Tuesday, Mrigasira, is all that can be read. From this it is surmise that the construction of temple of Tiruvaiyarudaiyar built by Palli Karanai- Vilupparaiyar.⁶⁰

Systems of Marriage

Marriage is one of the main social customs in any country. It is a spiritual sacrament among Hindus. During the Sangam age, the marriage was decided generally by his parents. The marriage structure for girls from other communities was called *pratiloma* marriage. Likewise, non-Brahmanas also recycled to marry Brahmana girls. This system was named annulus marriage.⁶¹ Chola period marriages hypothetically had enthusiastic procedures, but the most common was the Brahmana marriage with an appropriate modification of the prescribed time of life of the bride and groom. The caste system was rigid and the Government of the time preferred its continuousness. Consequently, the marriages were commonly of the similar caste. Inspired by rigidity in marriage matters, we hear about the same cast of mixed marriages. The Chola and Vijayanagara Kings, the Nayak Kings also had a lot of wives.

Dowry system

The dowry system is existent during the Chola period. It was named *Srithana* or *Sidhanam*. *Sridhanam* literally means a property decided to a woman by her parents on the time of her marriage.

Widowhood

Gandaraditya was a devout Chola King during 950-57 C.E. Sembiyan Mahadevi was the second wife of Gandaraditya Chola. It appears that Gandaraditya and Sembiyan Mahadevi hang around with our son for a long period and on the road to the end of Gandaraditya's reign. She had a son who later became Uttama Chola alias Madurantaka later the death of her husband, the widower was Sembiyan Mahadevi later life was full of benevolent activities such as spiritual. She was responsible for the establishment, building, adaptation, and ritual of several temples, as well as generously gift of land and other endowments to those temples. It was found particularly in the structure of temples.

In the 3rd regnal year of Uttama Chola, Sembian Mahadevi accepted 12 velis of land with an profits of 224 *kalams* of rice from the Thirunallam assemblage and gifted it to the temple to dimensions a flower garden named *Gandaradittam*.⁶² Sati was identified and members of the royal family such as Virama Devi, Rajendra's wife, who seemingly executed sati on the death of the King⁶³ and Vanavan Madevi, Sundra Chola's wife, a prince of the Malaiyamans line, make an offering of themselves on a fire burial home.⁶⁴

In addition, common people sati was also trained. The woman who sati was sacred and her portraits were worshiped in great service to Saivism. In this concern, Sembian Mahadevi's services are noteworthy. Several temples were constructed in this Mayiladuthurai region such as Thirukkodika,⁶⁵ Thenkurangadudurai,⁶⁶ Sembianmadevi alias Thirunallam,⁶⁷ Thirutunthurutti alias Kuttalam,⁶⁸ Anangur,⁶⁹ Thirumananjeri,⁷⁰ Thiruvakarai, Mayilavaruri Thirurihuri Thiruri.⁷¹ Among those temples, the Mayuranathar temple in Mayiladuthurai was very prominent.⁷²

Food and Dress

Food

Eating habits varied rendering to time, place, and the kind of people concerned. Certain cataloging records and exhaustive information on this topic were declared.⁷³ The temple was likewise a consumer.⁷⁴ Areca, betel nuts, coconut, frankincense, flowers, ghee, leaves, lights, pepper, rice, salt, sandalwood, and turmeric are commonly used by people.⁷⁵ Rice was the steady food of the people. People of the Chola age expended the succeeding foods, **sennel**, mountain rice, green grams, pepper, gingelly, tamarind rice, curd rice, ghee rice, vegetable rice, lamb, chicken, etc.

Dress

In ancient times, most people in Tamil Country, principally in rural ranges, dressed simply for the greenery of their clothing. The most cultured sectors of society are dressed in cotton clothing, occasionally accompanied with silk. The people of the

Chola age wore cotton and silk dresses. Women cared little about wrapper their bodies upstairs the waist and men cared less. This fabric was recognized as *oliyal*. The women wore clothes that enclosed most of their bodies and were embroidered and colored blue. Silk cloth was weighty and cotton light, so at night the women would take off the silk and put on the cotton cloth. They were known as *tuni*, *tuntu*, *aruvai*, *kurai*, all of which mean cutting fragments.

Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller, gave a strong interpretation of the Socio-Economic life of the peoples of the 13th century. Marco Polo came to Tamilnadu, when the Pandyan Kingdom was ruled by Maravarman Kulasekharar Pandya I. His explanations on the Tamilians environment of his time, you should know that in all this area of Malabar there is never a tailor who cuts the coat or sews it, since everyone goes naked; just out of courtesy they wear a portion of cloth; and so it is with men and women with rich and poor, yes, and with the King himself. It is a fact that the King is as naked as the others.⁷⁶

Ornaments

Men, women, and children are dressed in ornaments of many kinds, of Gold and Silver. Sculpture and painting from the past Sangam period and literary orientations from the earlier period reveal this. The bracelet was the reason of an epic disaster. Rings on fingers and toes, necklaces, belts, and earrings had always been related with grace in individual ornamentation. The nose ring is visible by its absenteeism in literature and by epigraphic reference or sculptural picture or painting. The *Tali* were a terrified ornament of Dravidian origin. The bracelets on her wrists and the *Tali* were not to be damaged by a widow. The *Aimppadaittali* was particularly envisioned for children to objection against evil spirits. The ornaments revealed in the epigraphs of the time were presented by Kings and devotees to the images of Gods and Goddesses.

Betel leaf

A stimulating material that people later used, the betel leaf, which they took composed with lime and a portion of areca nut. Chewing betel leaves was common and it was, as even now it is a social formality to offer betel leaves to guests. The betel leaf declared in the epigraphs of the Rajaraja Chola to which it belonged was also made for supply in connection with the staging supplies of this kuttu, rice flour, betel leaves, areca nuts, ghee, calirium mixture and turmeric⁷⁷.

Crimes and Punishment

Justice, like legislation, was largely a substance of local concern, and minor disputes were determined by one or other of the organizations to which the plaintiffs belonged. However, as the King was the head of state, he also acted as the supreme head of judicial administrations. The Dharmasanas were certain local courts in the delimited areas of the Kingdom that were authorized to administer justice in cases that arose within their jurisdiction. The town assemblies, the temple trustees, the caste elders had these local courts, which also had all the judicial and magisterial authority of the ordinary courts. The justice committees in the village assemblies were the Nyayattar.⁷⁸ The Dharmasana was perhaps the place where the person in charge of generous donations remitted the corresponding fines.

Amusements**Music**

The traditional music of the Tamils reached the zenith of glory during the time of Nayanmars and Alvars. Due to the efforts of the rulers, especially the Cholas, the hymns Devaram and Divya Prabhandam were compiled. During the Chola period the Tiruppadigam was put to music and chartists were appointed to sing. The Tamil inscriptions show evidence of the appointment of various singers in the temples to recite Saiva and Vaishnava hymns.

Dance and Drama

Besides music, dance and theater had an important place in social life. Sangam literature remarks that many ritual dances such as *Veriyatal* and *Kuravai* are performed in connection with rites, rituals, and worship. From the initial times, the drama was known in the Tamil country as Natakam.⁷⁹ The theme portrayed in the dramas was mostly noble telling the duties of various castes. Social practices and other stories were shadowed by the people of the Puranas.

Religious Conditions of the Mayiladuthurai Region

Those Chola monarchs were staunch Saivists in their religious conviction. It can be said that the Cholas of the Vijayalaya line began the silver age of Saivism and Vaishnavism of South India. Cholas Kings, Queens, Chiefs, and other prominent people were in charge for the founding and building of many temples, as well as generously giving land and other grants to the Siva and Vaishnava temples in the Mayiladuthurai region. During the Chola period, the construction of large-scale temple complexes began with other *gopuras*, *mandapas* and *praharas* of temples that received more attention than the main preserve of Mayiladuthurai region. Pandyas, Vijayanagar, Maratha and Nayakas also granted some land grants to the temples of Siva and Vaishnava.

Vaishnavism

Apart from these Siva temples, there are several Vishnu temples in the Mayiladuthurai region. The Sri Parimala Renganathar Temple in Tiruvindalur is a celebrated Vaishnavite temple. It is located one kilometer north of Mayiladuthurai. It is one of the Divya Desams, the 108 Vishnu temples worshiped in Nalayira Divya Prabandam by the 12 Alvars. This temple is along Cauvery and is one of the Pancharanga Kshetrams. The current temple is said to have been built in the medieval Chola period. The temple is praised by Sri Thirumangai Alvar in 10 hymns.

Mathas and Arachchalai

Mathas was part of the temple organization. Mathas, like that temple, played an important role in promoting religion and culture, and rich people gave gifts to Mathas. Mathas were generally located in temples and delivered food and shelter for scholars and teachers, as well as devotees. Each of them was chaired by a Sanyasin. Who was pious and learned and whose duty was not only the management and administration of the Mathas but also the encouragement of the schools, colleges and hospitals attracted by the Mathas.

Education and Hospitals

Higher education was generally confessional in character and took place in schools and universities attached to Mathas and temples. The school gathered under the temple Varanda has and Mathas was a common institution.

Hospitals

The hospitals were known as atulasala.⁸⁰ Matha also played an important role in taking care of people's well-being and in meeting their needs in daily life. The Matha was attached to the Thiruvavaduturai-udaiyar temple at Thiruvavaduthurai.

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